

Prairie Fare: Feeding The Mind - How Nutrition Supports Mental Health

By Julie Garden-Robinson, Food and Nutrition Specialist, NDSU Extension

I usually begin my column with a story to make you smile or even chuckle. This one is a little more serious, but I hope you find some helpful ideas.

Most of us know someone, a family member, friend or acquaintance, who has faced mental health challenges. Maybe you’ve experienced anxiety or depression yourself.

Lately, I’ve been reading about the increasing number of people dealing with mental illness. Sadly, suicide rates have risen, claiming the lives of more than 49,000 people in the U.S. in 2023.

About one in five adults in the U.S. lives with a mental illness, which can affect people of any age. The highest risk is among those ages 18 to 25, followed by ages 26 to 29.

Therefore, be mindful of services and hotlines in your area, and reach out for help when needed. Thankfully, the stigma surrounding mental illness is declining.

I am not a mental health counselor or therapist, so I’ll leave treatment to the experts. However, emerging research shows that our mental health is closely connected to our nutritional status. Nourishing our bodies goes far beyond supporting our heart, bones, muscles and skin; it also supports our brain and emotional well-being.

Neurotransmitters (chemical messengers) and hormones regulate our emotions and behaviors such as hunger. Three important neurotransmitters are serotonin (SERR-uh-TOE-nin), dopamine (DOH-puh-eh-n) and norepinephrine (NOR-reen-in-EFF-rin).

Serotonin helps regulate emotions, sleep patterns and appetite. You may notice appetite changes when you experience strong emotions. Interestingly, most of our serotonin is produced in the gut. Dopamine influences motor con-

trol and motivation. It makes us feel good when we experience something enjoyable, such as eating a delicious meal. Norepinephrine helps regulate attention and alertness and plays a role in our “fight or flight” response.

These neurotransmitters are derived from the amino acids tryptophan and tyrosine, which come from the protein we eat. Tryptophan is essential, meaning our bodies can’t make it, we must get it from food. When neurotransmitter or hormone levels become unbalanced, we can start to feel “off.”

As many of us have experienced, stress can cause us to feel “sick to our stomach” or describe something as “gut-wrenching.” This reflects the gut-brain axis, the connection between our digestive and nervous systems. When stressed, we might experience stomach pain, a loss of appetite, diarrhea or constipation.

You may have heard of the gut microbiome, the trillions of “good” bacteria and other microorganisms that help us digest food. We can nourish our microbiome by eating foods that feed these bacteria, such as fruits, vegetables, beans, yogurt and other cultured foods.

Here are a few nutrition-related steps that can support both body and mind:

- Eat a balanced diet. Include fruits, vegetables, grains, protein and dairy (or another calcium source) to feed all your body systems.
- Get enough B vitamins (such as folate, thiamine and riboflavin), which support brain and nerve health. Eating fortified grain foods and cereals, milk, salmon, meats, eggs, leafy greens and beans will help you get your B vitamins.
- Check your vitamin D. Eggs, fortified milk, some cereals, oily fish (salmon, sardines, mackerel) and liver provide some vitamin D, but supplements may be needed if you get little sunlight during winter.

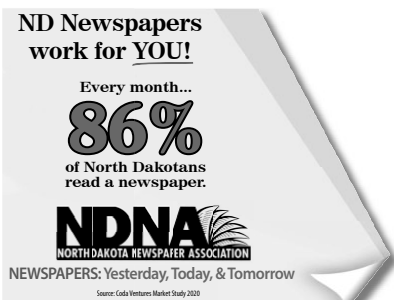
Talk with your health care provider to learn more.

- Visit www.choosemyplate.gov to create an individualized nutrition plan with recommendations for each food group.
- See the National Institute of Mental Health to learn more about mental health conditions and treatment options.

This recipe contains a variety of nutrients from the ingredients and probiotics from the yogurt. It’s one of my favorites.

Dill Pickle Pasta Salad
8 ounces dry whole-wheat shell pasta (about 3 cups)
¾ cup sliced pickles
¾ cup cheddar cheese, cubed
3 tablespoons white onion, finely diced (optional)
2 tablespoons fresh dill
1 cup pickle juice
Dressing:
¾ cup mayonnaise
½ cup plain Greek yogurt
¼ teaspoon cayenne pepper (or to taste)
4 tablespoons pickle juice
Salt and black pepper to taste
Cook pasta according to the package directions. Drain and rinse with cold water. Toss pasta with ½ cup pickle juice and set aside for 5 minutes. In a small bowl, combine all dressing ingredients and mix well. Drain pasta and discard any remaining pickle juice. Add pickles, cheese, onions and dill to pasta. Top with dressing and stir to combine. Chill for at least an hour before serving.

Each serving has 110 calories, 9 grams (g) fat, 3 g protein, 5 g carbohydrate, 0 g fiber and 150 milligrams sodium.



Permits:
EOG Resources, Inc., Liberty 79-2431H, SWNW 24-151N-91W, Mountrail Co., 2250’ FNL and 265’ FWL, Development, Parshall, 1923’ Ground, API #33-061-05604, Spacing unit: Sections 24, 25 and 36, T151N R91W, and Sections 30 and 31, T151N, R90W

EOG Resources, Inc., Liberty 80-2431H, SWNW 24-151N-91W, Mountrail Co., 2250’ FNL and 315’ FWL, Development, Parshall, 1924’ Ground, API #33-061-05605, Spacing unit: Sections 24, 25 and 36, T151N R91W, and Sections 30 and 31, T151N, R90W

EOG Resources, Inc., Liberty 81-2431H, SWNW 24-151N-91W, Mountrail Co., 2250’ FNL and 365’ FWL, Development, Parshall, 1926’ Ground, API #33-061-05606, Spacing unit: Sections 24, 25 and 36, T151N R91W, and Sections 30 and 31, T151N, R90W

Petro-Hunt, L.L.C., Hoiby 158-94-4C-3-3H, NESE 5-158N-94W, Mountrail Co., 1635’ FSL and 300’ FEL, Development, Confidential, Powers Lake, 2402’ Ground, Bottom hole location: NESE 3-158N-94W, API #33-061-05607, Spacing unit: Sections 3 and 4, T158N R94W, location outside of spacing unit

Phoenix Operating LLC, Afseth 34-3-10 2HF, NENW 34-158N-91W, Mountrail Co., 560’ FNL and 1730’ FWL, Development, Kittleson Slough, 2362’ Ground, API #33-061-05608, Spacing unit: Section 34, T158N R91W and Sections 3 and 10, T157N R91W, drill-back outside of spacing unit

Phoenix Operating LLC, Afseth 34-3-10 3HF, NENW 34-158N-91W, Mountrail Co., 560’ FNL and 1760’ FWL, Development, Kittleson Slough, 2362’ Ground, API #33-061-05609, Spacing unit: Section 34, T158N R91W and Sections 3 and 10, T157N R91W, drill-back outside of spacing unit

Phoenix Operating LLC, Afseth 34-3-10 4HF, NENW 34-158N-91W, Mountrail Co., 560’ FNL and 1790’ FWL, Development, Kittleson Slough, 2362’ Ground, API #33-061-05610, Spacing unit: Section 34, T158N R91W and Sections 3 and 10, T157N R91W, drill-back outside of spacing unit

Additional Information:
Released from Confidential Status:

Hess Bakken Investments II, LLC, EN-Hegland-156-94-3229H-5, Lot 3 5-155N-94W, Mountrail Co., Manitou
Hess Bakken Investments II, LLC, EN-Hegland-156-94-3229H-4, Lot 3 5-155N-94W, Mountrail Co., Manitou

Permit Renewals:
Hunt Oil Company, Palermo 156-90-2-31H-4, SESW 2-156N-90W, Mountrail Co., Ross, Confidential
Hunt Oil Company, Nichols 156-90-10-15H 5, NENW 10-156N-95W, Mountrail Co., Ross, Confidential
Murex Petroleum Company, HL-Harlen Lahti 10-3H MB, NENW 15-154N-91W, Mountrail Co., San-ish

Murex Petroleum Company, HL-Evelyn Lahti 10-3H MB, NENW 15-154N-91W, Mountrail Co., San-ish

Producing Well Completed:
Hunt Oil Company, Burke 155-90-36-25H-1, SESE 36-155N-90W, Mountrail Co., 533 bopd, 1114 bwpd
Producer Now Abandoned:
Hess Bakken Investments II, LLC, EN-L Cvcancara-155-93-2726H-1, SWNW 27-155N-93W, Mountrail Co.
Hess Bakken Investments II, LLC, EN-Hanson-156-94-3031H-3, Lot 1 30-156N-94W, Mountrail Co.
Hess Bakken Investments II, LLC, EN-Uran S 154-93-1312H-2, SESE 13-154N-93W, Mountrail Co.

Change of Operator:
From WPX Energy Williston to Devon Energy Williston, LLC:
Van Hook - R/S 16-4H, SESE 4-150N-92W; Pennington 16-15H, SESE 15-152N-92W; Brunsell 16-9H, SESE 9-150N-92W; State of ND 10-3H, SESW 10-150N-92W; Mason 2-11H, Lot 3 2-150N-92W; Olson 1-12H, Lot 4 1-150N-92W; Mason 2-11H, Lot 3 2-150N-92W; Olson 1-12H, Lot 4 1-150N-92W; Elk 16-21H, NENW 16-150N-92W; Spotted Rabbit 14-23H, NWNW 14-150N-92W; FBIR 13-24H, NENW 13-150N-92W; Mary R Smith 5-8H, Lot 4 5-150N-92W; Adam Good Bear 15-22H, NWNW 15-150N-92W; Arikara 15-22HC, NENW 15-150N-93W; Mandan 13-14H, SENE 13-150N-93W; State of ND 10-3HY, SWSE 10-150N-92W; State of ND 10-3HC, SWSE 10-152N-92W; State of ND 10-3HZ, SWSE 10-150N-92W; Mary R Smith 4-8HW, Lot 4 5-150N-92W; Mary R Smith 5-8HX, Lot 4 5-150N-92W; Dora Smith 5-HC, Lot 2 5-150N-92W; Dora Smith 5-8HY, Lot 2 5-150N-92W; Dora Smith 5-8HD, Lot 2 5-150N-92W; Mason 2-11HA, NENW 2-150N-92W; Mason 2-11HW, NENW 2-150N-92W; Mason 2-11HX, NENW 2-150N-92W; George Evans 14-23HC, SWSE 11-150N-92W; George Evans 14-23HD, SWSE 11-150N-92W; George Evans 11-2HC, SWSE 11-150N-92W; George Evans 11-2HZ, SWSE 11-150N-92W; George Evans 11-2HD, SWSE 11-150N-92W; George Evans 11V, SWSE 11-150N-92W; Mason 2-11HWR, NENW 2-150N-92W; Coyote Necklace 24HD, SWSE 13-150N-93W; Adam Good Bear 15-22HW, NWNW 15-150N-92W; Adam Good Bear 15-22HX, NWNW 15-150N-92W; Dancing Bull 16-21HC, SWSE 9-150N-92W; Dancing Bull 16-21HZ, SWSE 9-150N-92W; Dancing Bull 16-21HD, SWSE 9-150N-92W; Arikara 15-22HX, NENW 15-150N-93W; Arikara 15-22HB, NENW 15-150N-93W; Arikara 15-22HW, NENW 15-150N-93W; Arikara 15-22HY, NENW 15-150N-93W; Arikara 15-22HD, NENW 15-150N-93W; Adam Good Bear 15-22HC, SWSE 10-150N-92W; Adam Good Bear 15-22HY, SESE 10-150N-92W; Adam Good Bear 15-22HD, SESE 10-150N-92W; Spotted Rabbit 14-23HY, NWNW 14-150N-92W; Spotted Rabbit 14-23HW, NWNW 14-150N-92W; Olson 12-1HD, SESE 12-150N-92W; Olson 12-1HY, SWSE 12-150N-92W; Olson 12-1HC, SWSE 12-150N-92W; Olson 12-1HX, SWSE 12-150N-92W; FBIR 13-24HD, SWSE 12-150N-92W; FBIR 13-24HZ,

SESE 12-150N-92W; FBIR 13-24HC, SWSE 12-150N-92W; Olson 1-12HW, Lot 4 1-150N-92W; Elk 16-21HW, NWNW 16-150N-92W; Elk 16-21HX, NWNW 16-150N-92W; Van Hook R/S 4HC, SESE 4-150N-92W; State of ND 10-3HA, NWNW 15-150N-92W; State of ND 10-3HW, NWNW 15-150N-92W; Brunsell 9-4HB, SESE 9-150N-92W; Brunsell 9-4HZ, SESE 9-150N-92W; Glenn Fox 13-24HA, SWSW 12-150N-92W; Glenn Fox 13-24HW, SWSW 12-150N-92W; Glenn Fox 13-24HX, SWSW 12-150N-92W; Roggenbuck 4-9HX, SWSW 33-151N-92W; Roggenbuck 4-9HA, SWSW 33-151N-92W; Roggenbuck 4-9HW, SWSW 33-151N-92W; Edward Flies Away 7-8-9HY, NESE 12-150N-92W; Edward Flies Away 7-8-9HB, NESE 12-150N-92W; Edward Flies Away 7-8-9HZ, NESE 12-150N-92W; Edward Flies Away 7-8-9HC, NESE 12-150N-92W; Roggenbuck 4-9HY, SWSW 33-151N-92W; Olive Mae 7-8-9HX, NENE 12-150N-92W; Olive Mae 7-8-9HA, NENE 12-150N-92W; Larch 10-3HE, SWSW 10-150N-92W; Juniper 15-22HE, SWSW 10-152N-92W; Peterson 6-5-4 HC, SESE 1-150N-92W; Peterson 6-5-4 HQ, SESE 1-150N-92W; Peterson 6-5-4 HD, SESE 1-150N-92W; Peterson 6-5-4 HZL, SESE 1-150N-92W; Hidatsa North 14-23HZ, NWSE 11-150N-93W; Mandan North 13-24HW, SESW 12-150N-93W; Mandan North 13-24HA, SESW 12-150N-93W; Mandan North 13-24HB, SESW 12-150N-93W; Mandan North 13-24HX, SESW 12-150N-93W; Mandan North 13-24HC, SESW 12-150N-93W; Hidatsa North 14-23HD, NWSE 11-150N-93W; Hidatsa North 14-23HC, NWSE 11-150N-93W; Hidatsa North 14-23HB, NWSE 11-150N-93W; Hidatsa North 14-23HW, NWSE 11-150N-93W; Hidatsa North 14-23HA, NWSE 11-150N-93W; Hidatsa North 14-23HX, NWSE 11-150N-93W; Arikara 15-22HA, NENW 15-150N-93W; Arikara 15-22HQL, NENW 15-150N-93W; Hidatsa North 14-23HUL, NWSE 11-150N-93W; Raptor 13-24HY, Lot 1 18-150N-92W; Raptor 13-24HZ, Lot 1 18-150N-92W; Raptor 13-24HEL, Lot 1 18-150N-92W; Pennington 16-15HQA, SWSE 8-152N-92W; Pennington 16-15-14HY, SWSE 8-152N-92W; Pennington 16-15HB, SWSE 8-152N-92W; Pennington 16-15-14HZ, SWSE 8-152N-92W; Pennington 16-15HCL, SWSE 8-152N-92W; Spotted Rabbit 14-23HI, NWNW 14-150N-92W; State of ND 10-3HI, SESE 10-150N-92W; Missouri River 25-26HC, SWNE 24-150N-93W; Missouri River 25-26HIL, NWSE 24-150N-93W; Missouri River 25-26HY, NWSE 24-150N-93W; Missouri River 25-26HA, NWSE 24-150N-93W; Missouri River 25-26HW, SWNE 24-150N-93W; Missouri River 25-26HX, SWNE 24-150N-93W; Missouri River 25-26HB, SWNE 24-150N-93W; Missouri River 25-26HZ, SWNE 24-150N-93W; Missouri River 25-26HD, SWNE 24-150N-93W; Missouri River 25-26HUL, SWNE 24-150N-93W; all Mountrail Co.

More information on oil activity in the state can be found online at <https://www.dmr.nd.gov/oilgas/>.

A Year Away From Midterms, Election Tone Still Speaks Loudly

By Mike Moen, Prairie News Service

After voters in some states took part in local elections in previous weeks, the political world now looks ahead to the 2026 midterms.

The nation finds itself in a familiar situation with misinformation about election integrity still out there, and North Dakotans have a chance to foster healthy civic engagement.

The Brennan Center for Justice recently issued an expert brief, highlighting concerns it has about the Trump administration taking steps to undermine next year's vote. It aligns with continued false claims from President Donald Trump that the 2020 election was stolen.

Barbara Headrick, president of the League of Women Voters of North Dakota, said that messaging can have staying power when it comes from the top.

"And when that gets reinforced by elected officials," said Headrick, "including people around the president or the president himself, whoever the president might be, then that's going to get people to doubt their election system."

Headrick said the public needs to remember that U.S. elections are carried out effectively, especially when you consider the size of the country.

And her group, which is nonpartisan, wants North Dakotans to embrace that idea that when someone near you votes for a different party, they're not an enemy of the nation.

And if you have policy or voting concerns, she recommended calling your representative or election office to talk it out.

Headrick said these healthy habits can be formed well before you make plans to vote next year. She added that steering clear of hateful rhetoric on social media will eventually get the attention of politicians. "Most of the people who run for office don't act that way, but enough

do," said Headrick, "and they're getting positive reinforcement from enough voters that they're going to keep doing it if they think it helps them win elections."

Headrick said these undercurrents overlap with high-profile political assassinations over the past

Trump Administration Delivers Second Stage Of Crop Disaster Assistance

Three days after the government reopened, President Donald J. Trump and U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Brooke L. Rollins continue to put Farmers First, including the unprecedented move to reopen over 2,000 county FSA offices in the middle of the government shutdown so farmers could continue to access U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) services during harvest. The USDA will continue to support farmers and will release billions in disaster assistance for those recovering from natural disasters across the country.

"President Trump continues to put Farmers First and provide relief to American farmers reeling from the devastating natural disasters that struck across the United States in 2023 and 2024. The continued financial success of our farming and ranching operations is a national security priority," said Secretary Brooke Rollins. "USDA is doing whatever it takes to make good on President Trump's promise to expedite disaster recovery assistance to U.S. farmers and ranchers, ensuring viability, prosperity, and longevity for these men and women who dedicate their entire lives to our nation's food, fiber and fuel production. The majority of payments from the first stage are already in the hands of producers helping them prepare for and invest in the next crop year."

USDA's Farm Service Agency (FSA) is delivering more than \$16 billion in total Congressionally approved SDRP assistance. This is on top of over \$9.3 billion in Emergency Commodity Assistance Program (ECAP) assistance to over 560,000 row crop farmers and over \$705 million in Emergency Livestock Relief Program (ELRP) assistance to over 220,000 ranchers. Stage Two of SDRP covers, eligible crop, tree, bush and vine losses that were not covered under Stage One Program provisions, including non-indemnified (shallow loss), uncovered and quality losses. For Stage Two program details, including fact sheets, please visit fsa.usda.gov/sdrp.

The first stage, announced in July, remains available to producers

year. The Brennan report cites the Trump administration's noticeable move to make cuts within the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency. It says those actions put local election offices in a tougher spot to anticipate or recover from election interference attempts. The White House defended the cuts, arguing the agency had strayed from its mission.

who received an indemnity under crop insurance or the Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) for eligible crop losses due to qualifying 2023 and 2024 natural disaster events. FSA county offices will begin accepting SDRP Stage Two applications on November 24, 2025. Producers have until April 30, 2026, to apply for both Stage One and Stage Two assistance. FSA is establishing block grants with Connecticut, Hawaii, Maine, and Massachusetts that cover crop losses; therefore, producers with losses on land physically located in these states are not eligible for SDRP program payments.

Since March 2025, USDA has supported U.S. farmers and ranchers with more than \$16 billion in supplemental disaster assistance mandated by Congress in the American Relief Act, 2025 including \$9.3 billion through the Emergency Commodity Assistance Program, over \$1 billion through the Emergency Livestock Relief Program and, to date, more than \$5.7 billion in SDRP Stage One payments.

Milk and On-Farm Stored Crop Loss Assistance

The Milk Loss Program provides up to \$1.65 million in payments to eligible dairy operations for milk that was dumped or removed without compensation from the commercial milk market because of a qualifying natural disaster event in 2023 and/or 2024.

Producers who suffered losses of eligible harvested commodities while stored in on-farm structures in 2023 and/or 2024 due to a qualifying natural disaster event may be eligible for assistance through the On-Farm Stored Commodity Loss Program, which provides up to \$5 million to impacted producers.

The enrollment period to apply for milk and on-farm stored commodity losses is November 24, 2025, through January 23, 2026. Information and fact sheets for both programs are available online at fsa.usda.gov/mlp for milk loss and fsa.usda.gov/ofscslp for on-farm stored commodity losses.

10 Big Reasons To Shop In Stanley

1 Save Money

Most times a local merchant offers products at prices competitive to larger cities. You save time and gas by purchasing locally rather than driving many miles.

2 Quality Merchandise

When you buy a product locally, you know the reputation of the business. Any dissatisfaction you have with the merchandise will be handled on a personal basis.

3 Community Interest

Local merchants financially support the interest of your children and grandchildren, opening a wide range of opportunities to them through school, organizations and churches.

4 Selection

You determine what services are available locally. If there is a demand for a product or service, your local businesses are glad to provide them.

5 We Care About Our Customers

You know you're not just another face in the crowd. We'll greet you with a hello and a smile, and you can shop at your leisure.

6 Economic Development

Every dollar you spend at home does the work of \$5.00. Market analysts say a dollar spent in a local business will circulate five times through the local community. A dollar spent out of town is gone forever.

7 Your Tax Bill

When you shop in your hometown stores, part of every dollar you spend goes to pay your local tax bill...leaving LESS for you to pay toward their cost.

8 Personal Service

Can't decide what to give that hard-to-buy-for person? Local merchants know their customers and can aid in gift selection.

9 Variety of Merchandise

If you can't find what you're looking for, ask a merchant if it can be ordered or made available.

10 Employment

Hometown business employs local residents...creating jobs for you, your children, your friends and neighbors.